

***Remarks***

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 23-33 are pending in the application, with claim 23 being the independent claim. Claims 1-22 and 34-90 are sought to be canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 24-27 and 29-33 are sought to be amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

***Double Patenting Rejections***

In paragraph two of the Office Action, claim 23 was rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 20, 24, and 25 of U.S. Patent 6,813,485 to Sorrells *et al.* (hereinafter the '485 patent).

In paragraph three of the Office Action, claim 23 was rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 23-25 and 29 of U.S. Patent 6,061,551 to Sorrells *et al.* (hereinafter the '551 patent) in view of the '485 patent.

In paragraph four of the Office Action, claim 23 was rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 7, 175, and 177 of U.S. Patent 6,049,706 to Sorrells *et al.* (hereinafter the '706 patent) in view of the '485 patent.

In paragraph five of the Office Action, claim 23 was rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of U.S. Patent 6,580,902 to Sorrells *et al.* (hereinafter the '902 patent) in view of the '485 patent.

In paragraph six of the Office Action, claims 23 and 29-32 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 10, and 15 of U.S. Patent 6,687,493 to Sorrells *et al.* (hereinafter the '493 patent) in view of the '485 patent.

Without acquiescing to the propriety of the rejection, Applicants have submitted herewith a terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321(c) to obviate the judicially created double patenting rejections of claim 23 of the instant application over: (i) claims 20, 24, and 25 of the '485 patent; (ii) claims 23-25 and 29 of the '551 patent; (iii) claims 7, 175, and 177 of the '706 patent; and (iv) claim 1 of the '902 patent, and to obviate the judicially created double patenting rejection of claims 23 and 29-32 of the instant application over claims 1, 10, and 15 of the '493 patent. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejections of claims 23 and 29-32 be withdrawn.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

In paragraph 7 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 24-28 and 33 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As described above, Applicants have submitted herewith a terminal disclaimer to obviate the double patenting rejections of independent claim 23, thereby rendering the

objection to claims 24-28 and 33 moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the objection to claims 23 and 29-32 be withdrawn.

***In the Drawings***

Applicants note that the Examiner has not yet indicated whether the drawings filed on November 2, 2001 have been accepted. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner indicate in next Office Communication whether the drawings, as-filed on November 2, 2001, have been accepted.

***Information Disclosure Statements***

Applicants filed a First Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) on June 24, 2003, but the Examiner did not initial and return the 5 pages of the Form PTO-1449, indicating that the documents cited therein have been considered. Additionally, Applicants filed a Second Supplemental IDS on November 16, 2004. The Examiner returned all 13 pages of the Form PTO-1449, but the Examiner did not initial page 3.

For the Examiner's convenience, Applicants have submitted herewith copies of the First Supplemental IDS and Form PTO-1449, as-filed on June 24, 2003, and a copy of page 3 of the Form PTO-1449, as-filed with the Second Supplemental IDS on November 16, 2004. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner initial and return copies of the enclosed Form PTO-1449 pages and indicate in the official file wrapper of this patent application that the documents cited therein have been considered.


***Conclusion***

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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